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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,  
TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER  
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Terror panic in Europe: Who's next? - Hurriyet  
Spain to withdraw from Iraq - Milliyet  
Barzani's dream of a sovereign Kurdish state - Milliyet  
Syrian Kurdish-Arab conflict spreads to Aleppo - Hurriyet  
PKK threatens Syria - Milliyet  
Turkey, Jordan to discuss anti-terror cooperation - Turkiye  
European Parl.: Turkey's secularism restricts religious  
freedom - Hurriyet  
FM Gul warns Georgia against division - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Damascus blames US for Kurd-Arab conflict - Cumhuriyet  
US allies timid after Madrid bombings - Cumhuriyet  
Standing close to Bush more difficult - Radikal  
First crack in coalition: Spain withdraws Iraq troops -  
Zaman  
Coalition cracked - Yeni Safak  
Putin rejects Powell's election criticism - Radikal  
Putin to Powell: Mind your own elections - Zaman  
Putin's easy victory - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Cyprus: Four-way talks on Cyprus will continue in Lucerne, Switzerland with the involvement of Ankara and Athens beginning March 24. On Monday, Cypriot leaders Papadopoulos and Denktas presented to UN Special Cyprus envoy De Soto their proposals for changes to the Annan Plan. The Turks ask for strengthened bi-zonality, an acceptable border line, and fewer Greek Cypriot migrants moving to the north. The Greeks want no restriction on the number of displaced nationals moving back to their home in the Turkish sector. The Greek Cypriots insist that Turkish troops should leave the island immediately, and that Turkey's parliament must endorse the UN plan before the referenda. Athens has rejected Ankara's proposal that the Lucerne talks be held at the Prime Minister level. Athens is concerned that bilateral relations could be damaged if the prime ministers fail to reach an agreement. Ankara believes the attitude of Athens is shaped by tactical considerations. Meanwhile, Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas is due in Ankara this weekend for meetings with Turkey's political leaders.

Arab-Kurd conflict in Syria: Fighting has spread between Arabs and Kurds in Syria. Turkey massed troops near the Syrian border to halt a possible wave of refugees, papers report. Damascus has accused the rioters of collaborating with the US, noting that a 20-meter US flag was unfurled during one of the demonstrations. "Yeni Safak" columnist Husnu Mahalli claims that a CIA employee was among 30 demonstrators detained by Syrian police in Damascus over the weekend. Damascus has accused the United States of a 'foreign intervention' at a time when the US is preparing to impose economic sanctions on Syria. Ankara believes the incidents are a Kurdish reaction against repressive regimes in Iran and Syria. Meanwhile, Kongra-Gel's armed wing said on Monday it would 'not remain indifferent' to Syrian 'massacres' of Kurds.

Jordan's King urges Turkey to smooth ties with Iraq:  
Jordan's King Abdullah, who will arrive today for a two-day official visit to Turkey, urged the Turks to resolve their problems with neighboring Iraq. "None of Iraq's neighbors is prepared to pay the price of a civil war in Iraq," the King told CNN-Turk during an interview. The King noted that Turkey, a predominantly Muslim but staunchly secular state, has an important role to play in a changed world following 9/11. Abdullah said that he would like to see Turkey become a member of the EU.

European Parliament to discuss report on Turkey: The European Parliament (EP) will discuss on Tuesday a report drafted by Dutch parliamentarian Arie Oostlander concerning the reform process in Turkey. The report says that the current understanding of secularism in Turkey restricts the freedom of religion. Reforms enacted by the AK Party government are laudable, the report continues, but problems in implementation continue. Ankara must display more determination in fighting corruption and torture. Pressure on human rights organizations and restrictions on the use of Kurdish language should be removed. The report calls for the elimination of state security courts and the release of former Kurdish lawmaker Leyla Zana and her co-defendants. The report will be debated at the EP General Assembly at the end of March.

International investors meet in Istanbul: CEOs from 19 international firms with a total of \$830 billion in sales in 2003 met at the Investment Advisory Council summit in Istanbul on Monday. The global 'giants' urged Turkey to speed up privatization and to exert greater control over the unregistered economy. They called for a more effective judicial system, a simplified tax system, and the protection of intellectual property rights. The companies also asked for a reduction of bureaucratic formalities. Corporate attendees included representatives from Ford Motor Co., Lafarge, Siemens, Nestle, CitiGroup, Fiat SpA, Pirelli SpA, Unilever NK, Toyota, Hyundai, and Metro AG.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION: Spanish elections

"Change of direction for Spain"  
Sami Kohen commented in the mass appeal Milliyet (3/16):  
"The elections results indicate that the Al-Qaeda terror attacks hit Spain not only right in the heart but also at the ballot box. There will certainly be more consequences of the terrorist attacks, both in Europe as well as the US. Significantly, the New York Times immediately characterized the Spanish election results as 'a blow against Bush.' The election winner, Socialist party leader Zapatero, voiced a very different rhetoric about Spain's Iraq policy by standing against participation in coalition forces. It is likely that Zapatero will fine-tune Spanish foreign policy based on these considerations. . The general picture shows that Al-Qaeda got what it wanted through terror, which will probably make the organization feel even stronger."

"The Extraordinary Results of the Spanish Elections"  
Oral Calislar commented in the social democratic-intellectual Cumhuriyet (3/16): "The US elections are due at the end of this year. It is obvious that President Bush, who already faces the risk of losing, will lose even more points following the terrorist incidents and election results in Spain. Things are getting harder for Bush, and same goes for Blair. As a supporter of the occupation, it is unlikely that Blair can stand the pressure for too long. In the light of September 11, the results of the Spanish elections could be considered as a starting point for very important changes in the world. This is the beginning of a new era. The credibility of those who provoked the war and the occupation will drop. Anti-war activists have strengthened their position in Europe. We should realize one other fact: the political address for the anti-war movement in the world is the left. I believe that Turkey and the Turkish left have important lessons to learn from these results. Supporting peace does not mean simply opposing the occupation of Iraq. Supporting peace means to have a pacifist stance against the basic problems in Turkey and the wider world. The Spanish people have created a 'light of hope' for the world. Having suffered under the Franco regime for years, the Spaniards have now produced a result that will lead to a great change in the world. The children of the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca, who was killed during the civil war, have produced what was expected of them. From this point on, we can be more hopeful."  
"Global Resistance to a Global War"  
Ibrahim Karagul argued in the Islamist Yeni Safak (3/16):  
"It may not be clear enough to those who do not want to read

the signs, but the fact of the matter is that we are going through a period of global war. The Spanish elections have made it very clear: the Spanish people toppled the ruling party by standing against this war. The statement of Zapatero is something to look at very carefully, because he is criticizing unilateral action and a war based on a bunch of lies. Zapatero's decision to withdraw Spanish forces from Iraq also opens a debate within the EU about its Iraq policy and regional equilibrium. . There are some naive people everywhere in the world who take the GME initiative about freedom, democracy and welfare at face value. They should uncover their eyes and see the reality: This is not about freedom. It is about brutal occupation and looting of resources."

EDELMAN